

THE
FALLACY
OF
ABSOLUTE
Non-resistance
Fully Detected.



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THE HISTORY OF

THE ARMY

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ABSOLUTE

Non-Resistance

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THE HISTORY OF

THE ARMY

THE
FALLACY
OF

Absolute Non-Resistance, &c.

Whig. IS not the Law of Nature, I mean that of *taking Care of our own Safety*, a sufficient Plea for Resistance, in Case of *Tyranny*?

Tory. No; If you believe any Thing of Reveal'd Religion. For God's Laws are above all the Laws in the World. And since it is reveal'd to us by *St. Paul* and *St. Peter*, that we are to be subject to the *Higher Powers*, and not to resist 'em upon pain of Damnation; no Man can be safe hereafter, whatever he may be in this Life, if he resists.

Whig. Is Resistance entirely forbid by the Apostles?

Tory. It is forbid by 'em, without any Exception to their Rules.

Whig. If without Exception, then a King is to be obey'd in every Thing he commands. So that if he commands us to be of a contrary Religion to that we now Profess, or demands our Lives and Estates from us, tho' never so unjustly, I find we must submit. I hope it is not so bad with us, but we may defend our selves in some extraordinary Cases.

Tory. Yes; in case a King commands you to yield up your Religion, your Life or your Estate, you may oppose or resist him, as far as it is allowable by the Laws of God or Man. As for your Religion, you may keep it while you live, tho' you die for it at last; and die you must, rather than forego it. And as for your Life and Estate, they can't be taken away without a due Course of Law, at least in *England*.

Whig. Does *St. Paul*, when he bids us *not resist*, make such Exceptions? I thought just now, that no Exception was allow'd by you to that Rule of *St. Paul*. How comes it to pass then, that you say we may oppose or resist a King, for the sake of Religion, our Lives or our Estates, in a Legal way? Is not this resisting him in good earnest?

Tory.

Tory. It is a kind of Resistance indeed: but it is a *lawful* way of resisting. It is lawful: Because the Law of God commands us not to part with our Religion; and our Municipal Laws gives us a Right to defend in a *legal* way our Lives and Fortunes, in case either is in danger from the King.

Whig. Does St. Paul say we may resist him in a *lawful* way? As I take it, he does not say we may resist him in a *lawful* or an *unlawful* way; but only says, we are *not to resist*, without expressing a *lawful* or an *unlawful* way. And therefore you that resist, as you pretend, in a *lawful* way, are as liable to Damnation, according to St. Paul's Rule, as those that resist him *otherwise*. For 'tis not *lawful* to resist him at all, if an Exception to St. Paul's Rule is not to be *understood*, tho' it is not *express'd*. But I am apt to think an Exception ought to be made to that Rule, as well as to those other general Rules; *Swear not at all; Children obey your Parents in all Things*; and some others laid down in Scripture. Or else Men *ought* to refuse lawful Oaths; and Children *ought* to commit Murder and Theft, if their Parents should command 'em; nay, we *ought* not to be blam'd by God or our Posterity, should we change our Religion and resign our Estates, when a King commands them from us.

Tory. I hinted to you before, that it is unlawful by God's Laws, to relinquish the true Faith. I can't say the same in regard to your Estate or Life. But still you need not resign the two latter to any King of *England*, unless you lose 'em fairly in a Court of Justice. If you struggle at Law with your Prince about any of these Things, you resist him *lawfully*. But when St. Paul says we are *not to resist*, he means that we are not to resist the Higher Powers with *Force of Arms*.

Whig. Does St. Paul say we are not to resist with *Force of Arms*? I thought he had said only that we are not to *resist*. And here he may mean any kind of Resistance, as well as that by Force of Arms; unless he had added the Words, by *Force of Arms*, to his Rule.

Tory. That's all one: It must be understood, that he meant so.

Whig. How can you or any one else pretend to know his *Meaning*, unless he had express'd it in Words, or unless he were alive at this time to declare it? For my Part, I can't believe that he meant this any more, than that Magistrates, who *are not* Ministers for Good, are to be obey'd equally with those that *are* Ministers of God for Good.

Tory. Ma-

Tory. Magistrates are to be obey'd, whether they *are* Ministers of God *for Good*, or *not*.

Whig. Does *St. Paul* say so? If he does not, I am not bound to believe you. *St. Paul* makes it a distinguishing Character of God's Ministers, in that they *act for Good*. And therefore when a Magistrate does *not act for Good*, he is not God's Minister.

Tory. He is *God's Minister* still, tho' he does *not act for Good*.

Whig. How can that be, when *St. Paul* says *Magistrates are the Ministers of God for Good*? Without doubt Magistrates contradict *St. Paul's* Maxim, and are *not God's Ministers*, when they don't *act for Good*. And when a King ceases to be God's Minister, I hope it is no Sin to resist his Tyranny.

Tory. But People are not proper Judges of a King's Tyranny, and consequently can't know when it is proper to resist.

Whig. You seem to have a very mean Opinion of the People, when you say that they are not proper Judges of those Injuries they suffer. Are not you, when you oppose a King *lawfully* in Behalf of your Religion, Life or Estate, a *proper Judge* to know when you are injur'd in either? I think any Man in his Senses may know when an Injury is done him. Nor do you deny, but you will seek for a Redress at Law against your Prince,
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if he pretends to injure you in your Religion, your Life or your Estate *illegally*. Which seeking for Redress against your King, (as you are pleas'd to call it) is, in my Opinion, as plain Resistance as any can be: In that you *resist his Will*. And since you in particular think fit to take your Course at Law against a King, when *you judge* your self to be injur'd by him; pray let other People be as good *Judges* in their own Injuries, as you are in yours. And then you will appear less Partial, than you do at present.

Tory. Friend, I tell you that all Courses against the Higher Powers are *Unlawful*, except *Lawful* Ones.

Whig. So I declare to you that your *Lawful* Courses are *Unlawful*, according to St. Paul's Rule taken in a strict Sense, without an Exception to it. And so you, that resist *without Arms*, are as liable to be damn'd, as those that resist *with 'em*.

Tory. It is *lawful* by God's Laws to defend our Religion by Writing and Preaching: And it is *lawful* by the Laws of the Land to plead for our Rights and Properties, tho' a King endeavours to take 'em from us.

Whig. Does the Scripture say you may do all this? Shew me Authority from Scripture for what you say, or you do nothing.

Tory. The

Tory. The Scripture says, we are to *obey God rather than Man*. And therefore we are to keep his Commandments rather than the King's, whose Commands are perhaps contrary to God's. The Scripture indeed does not say, we may go to Law with the King, upon occasion. However going to Law is to be understood by those Texts; where it is said, give Tribute to whom Tribute is due, wrong no Man, and the like.

Whig. One of those Precepts respects the Duty of Subjects to their Sovereign; and the other, the Duty of Kings to Subjects, as well as the Duty of Subjects to one another. For Kings are but Men, tho' they are metaphorically call'd (from their Office) Gods in Scripture. And consequently this Duty respects them, as well as other Men. But I thought according to St. Paul's Rule before-mention'd, that Kings were exempted from being *oppos'd* in any thing; and that they might *do wrong*, tho' others may not. Yet by this Precept I find, they are to *do wrong* no more than other People.

Tory. 'Tis true they ought to do *no wrong*. But if they do, People are not to resist 'em *with Arms*.

Whig. Does not Christ himself say, *Mat. 10. Think not, that I am come to send Peace on Earth: I came not to send Peace, but a*
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Sword,

Sword, &c.? Now there can be no other Meaning of these Words, than this, that Christ apprehended, by his coming into the World, Wars would follow. And if a just Resistance should be made upon his Account against unjust Princes, Christians, that shall happen to do it, will be justifiable by these Words. Or else why should Christ say, *He came not to bring Peace?* In another Place St. Paul says, the 1st of *Corinth. chap. vi.* that it is utterly a Fault to go to Law with one another. And yet you say, it is justifiable to go to Law with the King; tho' it is contrary to Scripture in a strict Sense. You see what Inconveniences you plunge your self into, when you will not allow of Exceptions to Scriptural Rules. But perhaps you will allow of one to this. And why won't you to that in St. Paul's 13th Chapter to the *Romans*? You ought for one, as well as t'other.

Tory. But you must consider, that a Tyrant (and perhaps the greatest that ever was) reign'd in *Rome* at the time, when St. Paul wrote his Epistle to the *Romans*. And yet he order'd 'em not to resist *Him*.

Whig. This, for brevity's Sake, shall be allow'd. But after all, this *Non-resistance* order'd by St. Paul may be construed another way, than you are pleas'd to interpret it.

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He meant, I presume, (and you must give me leave to interpret his *Meaning*, as well as you assume to your self that Liberty) that he would not have his new Converts resist the Emperor in his *Just Demands*; whether he demanded of 'em to pay their Customary Taxes, or to keep themselves quiet. I have the more reason to think this was his Meaning; because some of his Converts fancy'd, that there was no other King in the World but King Jesus. An Opinion which St. Paul could not but know to be dangerous in those, that were oblig'd to acknowledge Caesar and pay him Taxes. And this made him tell them, that the *Higber Powers are the Ordinance of God*, &c. Now to what I have offer'd this I shall add farther, that the Christians in Italy, when St. Paul wrote, were very few; (perhaps not the *thousandth* part of the People) so few, that it had been the greatest Nonsense in the World for them to resist the Roman Powers *with Arms*, if they had occasion for it. And therefore it cannot be thought that St. Paul's Words *Resist not*, can have any Regard to Nero's Forces, but only to his *Just Authority*. For without doubt the Roman Forces, who had been Conquerors of almost the whole World, were much too great a Match for a small Number of unarm'd Christians. So that to advise a hand-

ful of Men not to resist such a Body of Men as *Nero's*, would look absurd in any Writer whatsoever : much more in *St. Paul*, if we could possibly think that he had the danger of *Nero's* Army in view, when he gave his New Converts this Advice, Resist not. I shall be the longer upon this Topic ; because some People lay a great Stress upon the circumstance of a Tyrannical Emperor in being, when *St. Paul* wrote his Epistle. But I think the Advice *Resist not* could not be agreeable to the Prudence of so great a Man as *St. Paul*, if he meant *Nero's* Forces ; for there was no occasion to forbid opposing them. The few Converts, that he had, could not do it, if they would, for want of Numbers. The whole meaning therefore of *St. Paul's* Advice to his Converts was, that he would have 'em be peaceable Subjects, without resisting the Emperor's just Commands. And this Account of his Advice (*Resist not*) will be better grounded, by considering what he said to his Converts, in case they should be persecuted. For in that case he bid 'em fly out of the Country, knowing that they were not able to resist *with Arms* the mighty Forces of the Emperor. Yet this *Flying* had been peremptory *Disobedience* in them, if the Emperor had commanded 'em

'em to stay. And can any body think St. Paul was not aware, that possibly *Cesar* might make 'em stay? Sure any body might easily conjecture it, that considers what *Temper Nero* was of, and how often he sported himself with the Torments of his Subjects. Now because St. Paul was not ignorant of the Weakness of the *Christians* in respect of the *Heathen Legions*, he bid his Converts fly, if they were persecuted. But they might have withstood Force with Force, if they had Power; having our Saviour's own Words for their Justification, *I bring not Peace among you but a Sword*. As much as to say, that Christians might take *Swords* into their Hands to defend themselves on the account at least of Christianity.

Let us now suppose St. Paul speaking in our modern way to the Roman Christians. Thus I will suppose him to say; *Bethren*, You are but a handful of Men, and *Cesar* has great Forces under his Service. Have a care therefore that you behave yourselves like good Subjects: *Resist not* his just Commands, but pay your *Taxes*, and make no Disorders. As far as he acts for good, he is God's Minister. And therefore you ought to obey him, if he is good to you. But be sure fly out of his Country, if he persecutes you. Don't pretend to re-

st; for 'tis in vain to resist his great and well-disciplin'd Army. Thus he must have talk'd to his Converts, if he meant to preserve 'em from the Cruelty of *Nero* and the Power of his Army. For *Nero* was bloody, and his Army was great. If he had talk'd thus, *Resist* *Nero's* Forces, when they are cruel to you, it had look'd like impolitick Advice. And therefore he bid 'em *fly*, rather than be so unwise, as to *resist* the valiantest and the greatest Army then in the World. So that *Resist not* must regard only *Nero's* just Authority, not his Army. But you'll say perhaps, St. Paul could not be too cautious in giving Advice to his Converts. And therefore we will admit, that by this Advice he meant they should not engage themselves in a War with *Nero*. In this sense *Resist not* was good Advice, as the Case then stood with the Christians. For it sav'd them from being kill'd, who could not possibly have escap'd, if they had all in a Body resisted *Nero's* Forces. It's probable a general Massacre would have happen'd, and they would have been all murder'd, if they had pretended to take up Arms against the Heathens then. For the Heathen Party then was a thousand times greater than the Christian, as I told you before.

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Non resistance indeed or not taking up Arms, when People are not able to resist Tyranny, may not be amiss. But when People have been in a capacity of resisting Tyranny, the contrary Practice has always been preferable to it. The Duty of the former Doctrine, pretended by some of our Clergy to be so necessary, implies such Cruelty in it, that it cannot in an absolute Sense be suitable to *God's Mercy*. For according to their Notion, we must sacrifice our selves our Wives our Children and Estates to the Caprice of every Tyrant, tho' we are never so much able to oppose him. But methinks, in Cases of Oppression and Persecution, it's more agreeable to God's Mercy, that he should suffer us to defend our selves, when we are able, than that he should forbid us. I'm sure Non-obedience, when a King does not act for Good, was hinted at by that glorious Sentence, *Magistrates are the Ministers of God for Good*. 'Tis so plainly imply'd by this Expression, that it cannot be deny'd, for Reasons above-mention'd Nor need I here to repeat our Saviour's own Expressions justifying Christian War in Defence of our Religion as plainly, as the other Expression justifies our Non-obedience to Kings, when they do not act for Good.

Let

Let us again suppose (by way of strengthening my preceeding Arguments, and yielding to other People's Opinions sometimes, as well as adhering to my own) that the Christians in *St. Paul's* Time were as numerous and as well disciplin'd as the Heathens; let us also suppose him to be addressing himself to them thus: *Brethren, Nero* thirsts after Christian Blood, and intends to sheath the Sword of Persecution in every one of your Bowels. And tho' you are as numerous, tho' you are as well disciplin'd, nay tho' you are as valiant as his Soldiers; yet you must let 'em alone to do the Work that *Nero* has commanded. For he is *the Ordinance of God*, &c. Should he, I say, have said all this to his Converts, would not they have deserted him? Nay, would not they have had as ill Thoughts of him, as of *Nero*? Would not they have hated that Religion, which impos'd such a Hardship upon 'em as dying for its Sake without Resistance by the Hands of cruel Men in the most Passive Manner? And would not they have thought such Passive Obedience to be inconsistent with *God's Great Mercy*, which had always been represented to 'em as the brightest part of his Character? Without doubt God is merciful, and cannot desire Christians should suffer, when they are able to fly from Tyranny,

ranny, or *resist* it, if occasion be: *St. Paul's Resist not* therefore must have another Meaning, than some of our Clergy put upon it. I believe it must be that, which I mention'd a while ago.

Tory. I acknowledge this to be rational. But as to those Sayings of Christ in *St. Matthew*, they do not justify Resistance against unjust Magistrates. He only means there, that his Coming will be the occasion of Wars.

Whig. Then I say Wars are justifiable, if our Saviour is the occasion of 'em. And pray whose Cause can we defend with Arms better than his?

Tory. As to going to Law with the King, that is justifiable by the Laws of our Country.

Whig. No matter for the Laws of our Country, if they are contrary to the Laws of God. Come, I find you are in a worse Condition if you go to Law with the King, than those that justly take up Arms against a Tyrant: In as much as our Saviour's Words are preferable to those of *St. Paul*; Christ in his Character being superior to the other.

Tory. But can you say it is lawful, by the Laws of God, to take up Arms against a Tyrant?

Whig. I have partly prov'd that already from our Saviour's own Words, when he said, *I come not to bring Peace.* But I shall prove farther by several Instances out of the Old Testament, that God Almighty commanded Resistance against Tyrants. Witness the Resistance of the *Israelites* against *Rheoboom*, who threatned to oppress them with greater Taxes than his Father *Soloman* did. By the by this was all his Fault. He had done no injury to the *Jewish* Religion, that we can be inform'd of. See the 1st. of *Kings*, chap. the 11th, 12th, &c. You find there that he only threatned to be a Tyrant; and yet God by his Prophet *Abijah* commanded him to be resisted. How much more will he approve of Resisting those, who are actually Tyrants?

Tory 'Tis true this Story of *Rheoboom* is in the Old Testament. Nor am I ignorant, that God has ordered other Kings to be depos'd, when they were not good. *Joram* at God's Command was depos'd and slain by *Jebu*. See the second of *Kings*, chap. 9. I own too that there are other Examples of this kind. But the People that resisted and depos'd their Kings in those Days, had God's own Authority for what they did. And in this the *Israelites* were justify'd. But can
People

People now a-days shew a Commission from God for Resistance, as the *Israelites* could?

Whig. God's Care over *Judah* and *Israel* was more signal than over other Countries. For there he appointed *Prophets*. And those *Prophets*, by his Command, were to appoint who should be *Kings*. This I say was peculiar to *Judah* and *Israel*. But God did not deal so with other Nations. Nor does that particular Providence continue there, where it was once. God has forsaken *Judah* and *Israel*. And he governs in that part of the World now, as he does in other Places, providentially. His Vicegerents now a-days can shew no Commission immediately from him for Governing, no more than People can shew Commissions from him for Resisting bad Kings or Tyrants. Tyrants and the People in that respect are equally incapable of producing such Commissions. And yet both may have Proofs out of Scripture for a mediate Authority. But 'twould be in vain now for Kings or for People to pretend to an immediate one. God indeed gave it to both formerly, as he thought fit. But the Method, formerly us'd by God, will be us'd no more. *Prophets*, by whom God com-

municated his Mind to *Judah* and *Israel*, were plentiful then. But we are assur'd by the Gospel, that no *true Prophets* ever will be in the World after Christ and his Apostles. And therefore those, that pretend to say Kings have an immediate Divine Authority, are not to be believ'd. Such *pretending Prophets* may as well keep their Breaths to cool the present Heats among us, as tell such Falsities.

Tory. Notwithstanding all this, I am certain Kings have a Divine Authority. Because *St. Paul* says, Magistrates are the Ministers of God.

Whig. You have left out the Words *for Good*. Pray let those Words be in the Sentence. And I'll agree to what you say. It is granted that they are *his Ministers*, while they act *for Good*. Such a Commission as this is given to all Magistrates. But when they do not act *for Good*, their Commission loses its Divine Authority, as I have elsewhere prov'd.

Tory. Are Examples out of the Old Testament sufficient to justify Resistance in succeeding Ages, since *St. Paul* has told us Resistance is damnable?

Whig.

Whig. 'Tis true Resistance is damnable, if we resist a *Minister of God for Good*. But a Tyrant is no *Minister of God for Good*. And therefore if we resist such a one, it is not damnable. Besides, in Cases of Tyranny, we find God has order'd *Rheoboam* and *Joram*, both Tyrants, to be resisted. And whose Authority can be greater, than that of God? Certainly his Authority is above *St. Paul's*, *St. Peter's*, or any Body's else.

Tory. Thus you make God to be Author of Resistance.

Whig. He was Author of Resistance in that Nation, where he govern'd in a particular manner. Nor could the People of *Israel* be guilty of a Sin in resisting their Kings, as long as God himself patroniz'd their Resistance. No Body sure will affirm the contrary.

Tory. But can you say God patronizes Resistance now a days?

Whig. Yes, without doubt he does, if there is a just Cause to resist. *Tyranny* was the Cause, why he authoriz'd the

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Israelites

Israelites to resist their Kings. And *Tyranny* is a just Cause, why God has permitted People to resist in other Nations since. And the same Cause will be good always.

Tory. Is Divine Permission a Divine Allowance?

Whig. In a Case of Tyranny it is. For God commanded it in Cases of Tyranny. And therefore when it is made use of in Cases of Tyranny, it can be no Sin.

Tory. Why?

Whig. Because God commanded it in those Cases. And to be sure God would never have commanded it, if it had been a Sin. To think otherwise, would be to make God Author of Sin. Which I hope no body will pretend to.

Tory. But our Laws style our Kings Sacred, and forbid Resistance against 'em.

Whig. Our Laws mean Legal Kings. And our Constitution admits of no Tyrants. But suppose it does; yet resisting Tyrants

Tyrants is justifiable by Scripture and
the Commads of God himself, who is
above all Kings, as his Laws are above
all Humane Laws whatsoever,

F I N I S.
